

HISTORY ON THE GROUND

Visit Overland Trail sites in Utah, Summit, and Morgan Counties

FOLLOW the trail traveled by emigrants, soldiers of Johnston’s Army, and the Pony Express. Within minutes of Salt Lake City, you can explore the terrain they tramped across and see lots of very interesting sites.

EAST CANYON SITES

Heading east from Salt Lake City up Parley’s Canyon, take the East Canyon exit. At the exit, set the odometer to 0 and drive north. (Mileages are approximate.)

.7 miles: Camp Grant marker. Here the Donner Party camped in a “neat little valley, fine water, good grass” while clearing a road up Little Mountain. Mormon pioneers and Johnston’s Army also camped in this area.

1.4 miles: On the right side of the road is a fairly large dirt turnout. The hill to the west is Little Mountain, a steep, hot climb for emigrants and soldiers. Still on the hill are tracks left by thousands of wagons. The tracks have been eroded into swales, partly because of the sheep that have also used the trails over the years.



Eroded wagon routes near Little Dell Reservoir.

3 miles: Little Dell Reservoir. At the northeast corner of the reservoir, in an area known as Birch Springs, there is a foot trail. Follow this trail east and get a feel for what it was like to travel and camp in this canyon. On the south side of the trail, look for a stone monument that marks the site of the Ephraim Hanks/Pony Express Station. In 1861, John W. Dodson, who had served as Utah Territory governor for less than a month, stopped here as he fled the Territory. In Salt Lake City he had made a lewd proposition to a young widow, and at the Hanks Station three men gave him a severe beating in revenge.

If you continue up the road you will come to Big Mountain Pass, where you can hike down the emigrant/soldier trail. But it’s so much more authentic to hike uphill, toward the valley, so next get back on I-80 and drive east to the Jeremy Ranch exit. Follow the Jeremy Ranch Road past the clubhouse. When the pavement ends and becomes dirt, set the odometer to 0.



Fortifications at Mormon Flat, seen from above.

TO MORMON FLAT AND BEYOND

3.7 miles: To the west of this point is Little Emigration Canyon. On each hill on either side of the canyon you can see horizontal rock breastworks—built by the Mormons in the fall of 1857 to defend against Johnston’s Army, which was sent by the U.S. government to quench a rumored Mormon rebellion and install a new governor for Utah Territory. The Mormons built the walls about four feet high and dug trenches for riflemen. They also built a dam on the creek to force the troops to travel right under the fortifications.

The Mormons and army never engaged in any real battles. But if they had, one of the soldiers traveling with the army wrote that these fortifications would have been useless against the army’s howitzers.

4 miles: Mormon Flat, where you can get on the Little Emigration Canyon trail. The emigrant trail made its longest continuous ascent up this canyon—1,400 feet in four miles. You can follow thousands of emigrants, soldiers, Pony Express riders, and stagecoach travelers by hiking this trail. You will find rocks marked with rust where wagon wheels scraped them, parallel wagon ruts, and swales showing old wagon routes that are now eroded.

4.5 miles: At the top of a rise, go through a break in the fence. The main group of



John Eldredge and William Smart at the Large Springs Camp.

History in books is great. But history on the ground is completely different. When you visit actual sites, you can see, smell, hear, taste, touch, imagine, and understand the past in a whole new way. This summer, find some ways to explore history close up and personal.

Brigham Young’s vanguard company camped here, at Large Spring. You’ll see white posts placed by the California-Oregon Trails Association marking the route the wagons took. Look around at the rocks on the ground. You can find rust marks and grooves left by wagon wheels.

Continue north, noticing the beautiful East Creek. To the pioneers, the creek was a lot of trouble. They crossed it 11 times, cutting the thick willows the whole way.

6.5 miles: Look forward to see Bauchmann’s Station, a restored log structure (it has been moved 100 yards) that once harbored stagecoach travelers and Pony Express riders.



Above: Bauchmann’s Station. Below: the nearby ford across East Canyon Creek (8th crossing).



7.1 miles: A large turnout is near the place where the pioneers forded East Creek for the 8th time. On the hill opposite, out of sight, are more breastworks. The Mormons built these fortifications at fords, where troops would be slowed down. They also made sure they would have an escape route up a canyon if needed.

Continue on Highway 65 toward East Canyon Reservoir. Pass East Canyon Resort and pull into the campground. On the hill at the start of Dead Ox Canyon (above the No Parking sign) is an L-shaped fortification built with large rocks. If you want to search for it, you must get permission from East Canyon Resort.

Broad Hollow: Continue past East Canyon Reservoir. Just after highway mile marker 20, read a marker that explains Broad Hollow.

Hogsback Summit: Continue on. At the

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HANDS-ON HISTORY FOR ADVENTURERS

Summit County sign, you will be at Hogsback Summit. Look backward at the Wasatch Mountains—a magnificent sight for us, but for the pioneers a discouraging one. Here is where they first saw the mountain range they would have to cross, which is why Stan Kimball called this spot Heartbreak Summit. Drive a little way beyond the summit, stop, and look back. The wagon ruts are clearly visible.

Continue on. Notice the terrain that the wagons would have crossed. The falling-down cabin at West Henefer Road is the John Dearden cabin. Continue through Henefer and on to the town of Echo.

ECHO CANYON

From Echo, get on the old highway (which runs north of the freeway) and go east up Echo Canyon. You'll pass the Echo Water Tank, a spot where Brigham Young once camped. Set your odometer to 0 here.

.6 miles: Look for a pre-1880 "billboard" on the cliffs. The sign advertises a hotel: "Salt Lake House, SLC Utah."

1.5 miles: The Narrows. Near here the Mormons built a huge breastwork and a 500-foot-long rifle pit (across the freeway, near the base of the telephone pole line). They also put land mines in this area, made from oak barrels, one-pound cans of powder, and flintlocks. And they built a big

dam here with plans to flood the Narrows and make passage impossible. In all, they built 14 fortifications in this canyon.

1.9 miles: Stop at the end of the guardrail after the Narrows. Here the Mormons dug a trench 10' deep and 7' wide to stop the troops' progress. On the cliff just east of the speed limit sign, you can spot four-foot-tall rock wall fortifications.



The cliff west of the fortifications is called Death Rock. Here a member of the Mormon militia on the ground aimed his rifle at a friend on the cliff, thinking the ball could never go that high. The ball hit his friend in the head, killing him.

2.2 miles: Another "billboard," for the Salt Lake House and "Plantation Bitters."

2.6 miles: Hanging Rock. Beneath the rock are pioneer names written with axle

grease. These names have been nearly obliterated by more recent spray-painted names. The Hanging Rock Station was located here.

There are many more sites along the trail, but this will give you a good start. For more information, see *Illustrated Emigrants' Guide to the Historic Sites along the Hastings/Mormon Trail*, by John Eldredge. Many thanks to John for generously sharing his extraordinary knowledge for this article!

Left: Echo Canyon fortifications. Below: A sign marketing Salt Lake City businesses to emigrants.



Visit the National Forests: A 110-year-old historic legacy

by Craig Fuller

The year 2007 marks the 110th anniversary of the establishment of the Uinta National Forest. The Uintah National Forest Reserve, as it was called in 1897, was Utah's first national forest and encompassed slightly more than 705,000 acres. Along with twelve other national forest reserves (all of which would later become national forests) it was established by President Grover Cleveland on February 22, 1897; these are



collectively known as the "Washington's Birthday Reserves." This action of President Cleveland almost tripled the total acreage of forest reserves in the West from 13 million acres in 1893, when President Benjamin Harrison left office, to 34 million acres.

The original Uintah National Forest Reserve included the Uinta Mountains. Several boundary changes have taken place since (including putting management of the Uinta Mountains in the Ashley National Forest and Wasatch-Cache National Forest). Today there are eight national forests in Utah encompassing more than eight million acres.

Below: Forest Officer Michell fishing in Beaver Creek.

At left: Forest Officers Parke and Lewis crossing the Provo River.



Historian Craig Fuller is the associate editor of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*. For information on membership in the Utah State Historical Society—which includes the *Quarterly*—call 801/533-3517.

WASATCH NATIONAL FOREST PHOTOS, STATE HISTORY COLLECTIONS

WHO ARE THEY ?

The cover shows Henrietta Clark (on left) and B. T. McMaster. These women became clerks to Utah's Constitutional Convention of 1895. At this time, women's rights were on the line; the all-male convention would debate giving women the vote and the right to run for office. In fact, the delegate who put forward Clark's name, David Evans of Ogden, was also the first to move that women be granted these rights.

George M. Cannon first nominated McMaster as clerk: "I believe she is perfectly capable of doing the work required, and that we will by this means give representation to the fair sex."

Evans then nominated Clark and assured the delegates, "She is thoroughly competent, I understand, [and] she is willing to work cheap. She is an honest lady devoted to her work and," he joked, "does not seem to be very much devoted to the gentlemen around her."

The hour-long debate was intense and somewhat tangled. After McMaster was elected as the first clerk, debate continued. Anthony Ivins noted that Clark was more qualified than the other (male) candidates, and would probably work for less pay.

Democrat David Evans jokingly reassured reluctant delegates that Clark was

actually a Republican. George M. Cannon parried that they could tell she was Republican by her appearance, therefore, he seconded the nomination." (The delegates laughed and applauded.)

Henrietta Clark won the appointment. Although the women were chosen partly because they would "work cheap," the election seems to have been a matter of women's honor. B. T. McMasters later told the *Deseret News* that if those who opposed her appointment ever ran for office again, she would make sure they received no votes from her women friends.